

and his parish churches emptied by a rival ministrations as formidable as that of Wesley and "Whitefield. All raised one fierce war-cry against the friars. All reiterated the same charges, and these charges were repeated by every anonymous satirist who has left us a verse on the subject. The portrait of the friar that has thus come down to us from so many sources, though a caricature, is uniform and consistent. Of one thing he is never accused: he is never taunted with living at home in his cloister and allowing souls to perish for want of food. The complaint is that he stuffs them only too effectually with garbage. The monk was despised by the reformer; the friar was hated.

The causes of this continued success are not far to seek. The mendicant orders were, in the mediaeval world, the institution best fitted for propagandism. In the twelfth century the monk and the parish priest had been the principal religious influences. The monk had the advantage of learning, of learned society, and of perpetual contact with his superiors and equals. But he could not come into touch with the people as long as he continued the life of the cloister. He was best fitted to deal with mankind, but from mankind he was rigidly excluded. The parish priest, on the other hand, was continually in contact with his flock; but he was too often ignorant, and he was generally impoverished. Being in many cases a child of the soil like his parishioners, he knew of no other life save the life of the peasant, and of no other learning or religion save the traditional piety of the countryside. The terrible isolation of rural life in the Middle Ages was one of the chief evils which the Church had to combat, but neither the monk nor the parish priest was perfectly fitted to cope with it.

The orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis brought to the aid of civilisation not only the zeal they had from the beginning and the learning which they soon acquired, but an organisation which united the advantages of the monastic and secular clergy. The friar was brought up in the cloister, where he learned such wisdom as books and educated society can give. He lived the life of a cleric among clerics, generally in or near some large city, where the newest ideas and